

JLC Position Paper

**FULLY FUND THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES BUDGET AND  
STRATEGIC PLAN AS OUTLINED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 19**

1. **ISSUE:** To provide the Department of Veterans Services (DVS) with the resources required to accomplish the specific recommended objectives (e.g. Turbo-vet, additional personnel, etc.) of Executive Order 19
2. **BACKGROUND:**
  - On June 16, 2006, Governor Kaine issued Executive Order 19 (EO19) – Serving Virginia’s Veterans
  - Among other initiatives, EO19 directed:
    - “All state agencies to identify opportunities to partner with the Department of Veterans Services on ways to offer new, expanded, or customized services that meet the educational, health care, and social service needs of Virginia’s veterans.”
    - “The Department of Veterans Services, working with all appropriate state agencies, to give special attention to opportunities for improving services to disabled veterans, including all aspects of the continuum of care and service delivery.”
    - “All state agency heads to renew their commitment to veterans’ preference in hiring.”
  - The EO19 report was delivered to Governor Kaine on April 30, 2007. The report identified 28 specific opportunities for the Commonwealth of Virginia to offer new, expanded, or customized services for veterans
3. **DISCUSSION:**
  - The specific opportunities identified in EO19 include:
    - The TurboVet System: DVS is developing a TurboTax®-type software application that will assist in preparing and submitting compensation and pension claims to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Such a software application will improve the accuracy of applications and ensure that supporting information is presented in a clear and consistent manner, making disability claims “ready to rate.” Additionally, as the application matures, it will pave the way for electronic submission of claims, thus expediting claims processing and receipt of benefits
    - The Provision of Behavioral Health Care Services by State Resources: From all accounts the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is overwhelmed with the demand for short-term and long-term health care for veterans of previous wars and those returning from the Global War on Terror in Iraq and Afghanistan. DVS has entered into discussions with the VA, the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services (DMHMRSAS) and the Virginia Association of Community Services Boards (CSBs) to develop an on-going contractual relationship for referral of veterans to the CSB services system for treatment for mental health and substance use disorders
4. **RECOMMENDATION:** That the Governor and General Assembly provide the Department of Veterans Services with the resources required to accomplish the specific recommended objectives (e.g. Turbo-vet, additional personnel, etc.).

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